# NORTH Bi NORTHWEST

**Newsletter of the Seattle Bisexual Women's Network, a member project of Gay Community Social Services**

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## WALKING IN WONDER

**By Janice Van Cleve**

Have you ever been captivated by a book? Did time and space disappear completely as you devoured it page by page all the way through to the end? Or has it ever happened that a movie so intrigued you that right after the last credits, you felt an enormous compulsion to check up on the facts to see what was true and what was made up? Or did you ever read the jacket on a compact disk and actually write the artist to thank her for her music? This is just a glimpse of what it is to walk in wonder.

Some years ago I was offered the opportunity to take a trip to Central America to visit some of the ancient Maya ruins. I have always entertained an active interest in archeology but I imagined that the Maya were so mysterious and inaccessible that at most I would get to climb on some old pyramids and then check it off my list of places to which I could say I'd been. It was only after I was back on the ship that a silly horse race pricked my curiosity to dig deeper. One of the cardboard horses on the makeshift track was named after the ruler of the ruins we had just visited and people were betting on him. My ears perked up. So these Maya kings actually had names and histories that we can read? For the next three years I immersed myself in Maya research, revisited Honduras on my own, published a monograph, and wrote a biographical novel of this king and his city. My life took an unexpected and rewarding turn because I had been walking in wonder.

Not all wonder walks need to be so dramatic. A hike in the mountains can be a walk in wonder to the hiker who pays attention to what she sees. The grand vistas at the summit may not be as spectacular as the unusual mushrooms on the old dead log or the endless variety of mosses and ferns under the shady trees. A visit to an art gallery, meeting new friends at a party, or even weeding the flower pots can offer moments of wonder to the keen observer who is paying attention. The key, as one of my artist friends so succinctly put it the other day, is in how well we really observe what is there in front of us and what is going on.

She illustrated her point with paintings. To my unenlightened eye, a painting is a flat thing with pretty colors on it. However, her trained eye can see the story in the image, the story of the painter and the painter's method. It goes far beyond the subject of the piece and even beyond the style, the types of paint, and the methods of application. A painting also speaks about the painter – her passions, her history, her loves, and her losses. It speaks of the culture in its time and place. Far from being a static decoration on a wall, a painting is a window into an active vibrant world in progress, to the eye of the wonderer.

On a recent consulting assignment, I was working with a photography club whose mission is to tell the stories that need to be told, through photographs. We all know how a good photograph can not only capture a physical scene but also become a statement in itself even to the point of eliciting a gut reaction from all who see it. Who can forget the photo of the Afghan woman on the cover of National Geographic whose eyes mirrored the plight, fear, and hope of her whole nation?

*...Continued on page 4*

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*North Bi Northwest* is the quarterly newsletter of the Seattle Bisexual Women's Network. It is produced by women and is feminist in content. We feature news and events pertinent to the bisexual community, as well as creative writing and artwork.

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We welcome submissions from women and men that concern feminism, politics, sexuality, or anything of interest to bisexual women. Help define our culture! Share your histories, anger, pleasure, energy. Send us your essays, poetry, photographs, drawings, book reviews, short stories, interviews, media reports, rants, cartoons, erotica, journals, theory, conversations and letters. You're important to us and what you have to say is important to everyone.

We accept submissions on disk with hard copy (PC), typed, legibly handwritten copy or e-mail (sbwn@hotmail.com). If you send us something and we publish it, you get a free issue. Let us know what pseudonym you use, if you do not want to publish under your everyday name.

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**Deadline for submissions to the new issue: April 22, 2005.**

## SBWN Statement of Purpose

We are a group of self-identified women from diverse backgrounds working to create a feminist bisexual support network. We promote, in both the heterosexual world, and in the lesbian/gay community, the understanding and acceptance of bisexuality as one of many valid sexual identities.

We regard ourselves as part of the community united against heterosexism and homophobia. We are dedicated to the right of all people to define their own sexuality, free from any social, political, or economic coercion. The discriminations we face based on our gender and our sexuality are not the only forms of oppression. We recognize that oppression is non-hierarchical and that none of us is free until all of us are free. We have invested ourselves in the feminist struggle to transform our culture into one free of all forms of bigotry, hatred, and exploitation.

We seek to provide a safe place for women to explore all aspects of their sexual orientation and identity. All women are welcome to attend SBWN activities. We are exclusively a women's group in order to create a safe space for women's expression and leadership. We come together to affirm ourselves and our choices.

## North Bi Northwest

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Dedicated Volunteers

**SBWN**
**PO Box 30645**
**Seattle, WA**
**98113-0645**

SBWN can always use volunteers to help with a variety of tasks. Give us a call or talk to a facilitator at a meeting.

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North Bi Northwest is a publication of the Seattle Bisexual Women's Network, a member project of:

**Gay Community Social Services**
**P O Box 2228**
**Seattle WA 98122-0228**

# From the Editor...

I often get lost in books and shut out the rest of the world. I always take time to stop and look at the rainbows. I see beauty and wonder everyday in the world around me and try to share that, if possible, with anyone who happens to be present at the time. I have attributed this to being an artist and seeing things in a different way than non artists. It's not that other people don't see the same rainbow, but often they don't seem to stop and let the beauty and wonder of it sink in to their souls.
We have a story in this issue by Janice Van Cleve that talks eloquently about seeing beauty in our lives everyday. We have a couple of book reviews, a piece about make-up (what you put on your face) and we are happy to return to honoring our Valued Volunteers. We are including a listing of our roster of volunteers which we will continue in future issues. There was a call to acknowledge volunteer contributions by listing everyone who contributes to the smooth running of SBWN. Thank you to all who keep this organization alive.

We finally have a governor although the challenges have not yet been exhausted and we may still have to deal with another vote if the courts decide the lawsuits are valid.
The world is still dealing with the after effects of the tsunami. So many people vanished without a trace. It will be years before the area truly recovers. Here in the Pacific Northwest there is a lot of talk about prevention and warning systems. After all, we did have a tsunami less than fifty years ago following an earthquake in Alaska. The weather has been strange here. We got some snow a few weeks ago which gave us icy roads, and then rain and it got warm so we had flooding and mudslides and then most of the snow in the mountains melted and it's been warm for days. The ski resorts have had to close for lack of snow. I worry about the drought we will have later in the year because of this strange winter.

Attendance at meetings has been good with a few sparse showings over the holidays. We see a steady small stream of new faces. We had a very well attended meeting on the topic of casual sex that drew a crowd of twenty-two! See the great comments from that meeting in this issue. At that meeting a call was made to have another safer sex workshop soon so we put that on the meeting schedule in April. Some of the attendees expressed their surprise at so many women willing to discuss casual relationships, one night stands, fuck-buddies and sex so openly.

It is time for SBWN to start thinking about what our participation in Pride will be this year. The planning has to start soon even though the event is months in the future. Do we want to march and to woman a booth? We have a preliminary planning meeting on the schedule in April.
I am worried about the direction this nation seems to be heading. The anti-gay marriage amendment to our national constitution is rearing it's ugly head again. And there is a concentrated attack on Social Security with a scare campaign that reminds me uncomfortably of the scare tactics which were so successful in getting our congress to approve the war on Iraq. Social Security is not in imminent danger. The government's own projections show no problems for at least forty years. Private account schemes, which would send our country deeper into ridiculously high deficits, primarily benefit the investment industry in the short run and likely create smaller benefits for all but the most well off, should be discarded immediately. I don't understand anyone thinking that our social security funds would be better off with individuals taking their chances in the volatile and unpredictable stock and bond markets.

And then there is the call for striking down Roe versus Wade and sending women back into the dark ages of back alley and coat hanger abortions. I grew up in an era of illegal abortions, illegal birth control, no information about how our bodies worked, doctors (almost always male) were 'gods', middle and upper class women were destined to be housewives and mothers while poor women worked at whatever they could to survive. Back when women had few rights despite their ability to vote. Before Title IV supposedly allowed women equal access to sports and educational programs: Women and children were possessions of their fathers or husbands and divorce was extremely difficult. There was no such thing as spousal rape or child abuse. It is not a time I wish to return to.

I am doing my part by continuing to speak out for equal rights, staying connected to SBWN, writing small checks to multiple activist organizations, sending email to my congresspeople, and signing petitions nearly every week to protest the actions of our elected officials.

I hope you are all doing your part as well.

Cyprienne

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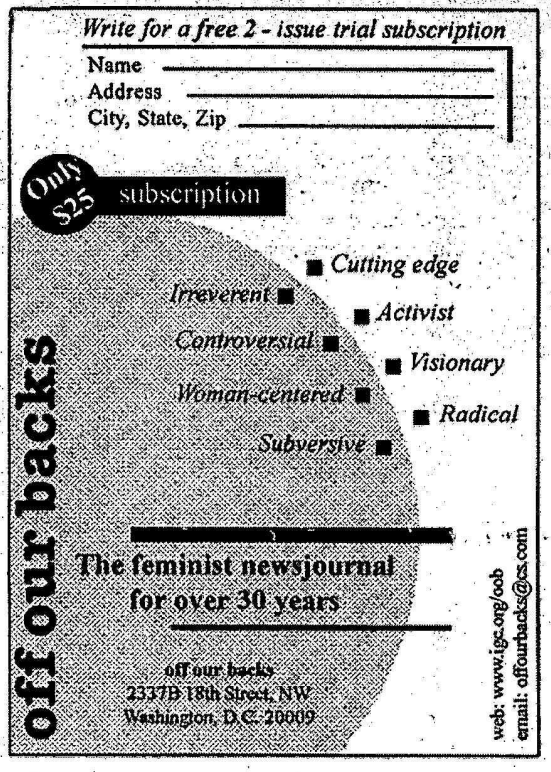
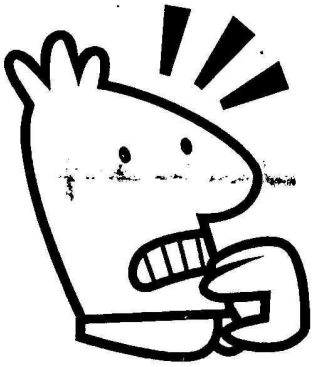
And how profoundly did the image of the earth rising over the moonscape alter our sense of common cause on one small rock in a vast universe? A really great photograph has an uncanny way of touching our sense of wonder and uniting us across time and space to the world in the picture.

As a consultant, I often find wonder in the dynamics of an organization at work. Even an agenda rigidly enforced is only a frame around the lively and deep world that it tries to contain. In every committee meeting, past history repeatedly confronts current circumstances which themselves are held differently by each of the players. Facts clash with moods as different personalities strive to paint the picture they see on other people's canvases. As I step back to watch the processes in motion, I can't help but delight in wonder at how many colors the same old threads of reality can take.
Walking in wonder is not walking aimlessly with no plan or purpose. Walking in wonder is observing, trying to understand, and observing again. Walking in wonder is open to outcome because it does not fixate on objects but instead focuses on the flow.



Money, for example, is worthless unless it is flowing and it often must be converted from stocks to land to tangible goods and back again to retain and grow its value. Even so, its value is relative to the ever-changing marketplace. Which is why buying things often shuts out opportunities for walking in wonder. If we limit our purchasing considerations to the mundane details of features and resale value, we could end up buying things that have value on paper but no purpose in our lives. If we appreciate a good dinner only because we got a coupon, we could miss entirely the value of the dining experience itself, the friends we shared it with, or the memories that the flavors evoked. This is why people whose attitudes and outlook reflect "a cup half empty" never find the path of walking in wonder. They are fixed on expected outcomes and ignorant or fearful of other outcomes. They are so busy focusing on what they don't have that they end up not having a life.



Time is the opposite of money. Time is always flowing and its value always increases as the amount of it we have left inexorably decreases. Which may be why we spend far more money on research and treatment of cancer and heart disease to extend the lives of old people but fail to fund adequate nutrition for children – but that's another story. We have no choice whether or not to spend time. Our only choice is how we spend it. People change careers, get divorced, or even sell their homes and go off traveling, in some part because they come to realize that the way they have been spending their time is now ridiculous. Comedians often point out the ridiculous in what we otherwise view as normal. Seeing the ridiculous in the normal is a good start toward finding the path to wonder.

One Sunday I showed up at a friend's house for a writing circle. When I knocked on the door, there was a long pause. It was one of those "who the hell could be knocking on my door on a Sunday morning" type pauses. My friend finally came to the door and greeted me with enthusiastic, if somewhat startled, surprise. She and her boyfriend had just gotten up. Apparently the other writers had forgotten the date as well. So here I was unexpectedly standing in my friend's living room with her new boyfriend fitting into their time and space like bacon at a bar mitzvah.

As it turns out, the three of us had a marvelous writing session and we consumed a whole box of chocolates in the process. Fueled no doubt by the chocolate, my friend asked me to join herself and her boyfriend at a modern dance performance that evening. After the performance, the producer came out and announced free beer and a free rummage sale upstairs, which

is a ridiculous thing in itself, unless of course ridiculous was normal that day. Haul away as much as you want, she said, it's all free because it is going to recyclers if you don't. Even for folks whose "cup is half full" the path of walking in wonder can be a workout.

It doesn't take a lot of money or time to walk in wonder. Greeting the homeless person selling newspapers outside the grocery store can be a walk in wonder if you ask him his name. Welcoming a new neighbor or a new business into your part of town shows that you notice them. Picking up a piece of trash and putting it in the can, volunteering in a local organization, or reading the store clerk's badge and thanking her by name are all footsteps on the walk of wonder. Remembering someone's birthday, telling someone how much they matter to you, and taking time to compose an email as if it were a proper letter are more footsteps.

By opening our eyes and ears, our nose, our taste buds, our emotional and tactile feelings and all our other senses, we can begin to notice the things around us that we would otherwise have ignored as invisible. We can begin to see things and people as they are, unbiased by sentiment or prejudice. We can begin to appreciate them in the moment and accept them as they change from moment to moment. As we hone our observation skills, we can begin to see and understand ourselves better as well and hopefully act on that knowledge.

Then we shall not fear the unknown for we will know how to integrate ourselves authentically into the midst of the flow. That's what it means to walk in wonder.

*Janice Van Cleve is a writer in Seattle who tries to walk every chance she gets. Copyright 2004.*

# Valued Volunteers

*North Bi Northwest is proud to reintroduce our Valued Volunteers column. This quarter's volunteer profile is on Kristina Kemmer. Thanks for your hard work, Kristina!*

**How long have you been involved with SBWN?**

The first SBWN meeting I attended was in late September of this year.

**How did you find out about SBWN?**

I had just moved to the Seattle area in July and was looking for a way to get more involved in the community. I went about searching the internet for different groups in Seattle and found the SBWN website. I saw the topic of the next meeting was Bisexuality and Feminism, so I thought I'd check it out. I've been hooked ever since!

*Kristina (left) with her friend Ren.*

**What job do you volunteer for at SBWN?**

I will be taking over responsibility for the SBWN website. So, if anyone has any creative ideas for it, just let me know.

**Have you done other volunteer positions for SBWN?**

Nope this is my first one, but I'm sure I will end up doing more in the future.

**Have you done volunteer positions with other groups?**

I have taken on volunteer positions since high school in just about any group I belong to.

**Why do you volunteer? With SBWN? With any other group?**

I like to volunteer because it allows me to feel like I have a stake in the group, so I feel much more involved. I like to be a part of the success and furthering of a group. I took on this position at SBWN because I like to do web site design and maintenance, so this is kind of a perfect match for me. The website is what drew me to the group, so I'm hoping to help draw more people into SBWN.

**What are your interests? Hobbies?**

I like to run, hike, ski, read, write, listen to music...especially live music. I love to go dancing, and I've just recently discovered the very sensuous art of Salsa dancing.

**How old are you?**

Twenty three.

**What is your real world job or profession? How do you make a living?**

I work in the Information Technology field for Boeing. Right now I'm working with a group doing software architecture for the 7E7 program. Good times.


**Hand Woven**

Scarves – Shawls – Vests – Ponchos – Blankets
By Cyprienne

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**Do you have a family you want to tell us about? Husband, wife, partner, children, mother, father, siblings, cat, dog?**

I have awesome parents living in Las Cruces, New Mexico. No siblings, but I have really close friends that I consider my family. I have a dachshund named Ringo, but he's staying with my parents. My roommate has a cat name Sebio, who is apparently neurotic. It makes life interesting.

**Where did you grow up?**

Well, I was born in St. Louis, Missouri, at which point my mom joined the Navy. From there we lived in Virginia, Guam, and Oceanside, California. Finally we ended up in Las Cruces, New Mexico where I went to high school and college.


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**How long have you lived in the Seattle area?**

Since July and I'm loving it so far.

**Do you identify as bisexual? When did you know?**

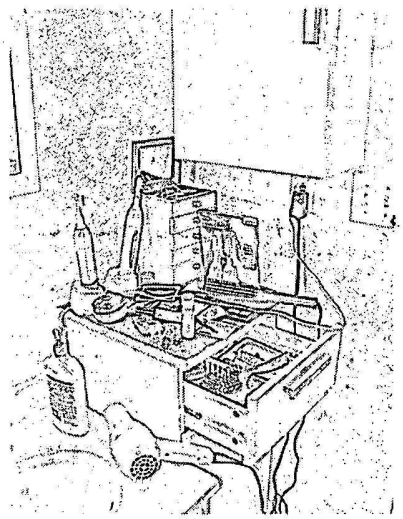
Yes I do identify as bisexual. I suppose I had identified as lesbian through college. There was not really the option to be bisexual—you were either straight or gay. I didn't ever feel like the lesbian label ever really encompassed everything that I was about. There was definitely something missing. I finally met another girl in my senior year of college who had felt the same way. It was the first time I could honestly look at the possibility that I was bisexual. I've been learning as much as I can about it ever since.

**Anything else you would like the readership to know about you?**

Did I mention my new fascination with Salsa dancing?

**Lipstick Lessons**
**By Diana**

During my last shopping spree I purchased a skirt and blazer and this somehow touched off an accelerated lesson in womanhood. While I didn't find it difficult to select the skirt, I found it amusing if not confusing on what else is suppose to go with the skirt. I had no idea that I missed the basic lessons in lipstick and nylons and I was determined to understand how it all worked.



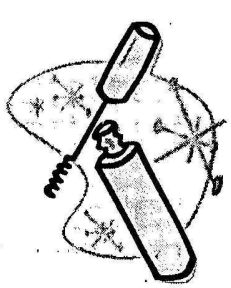
My firm was having a 75th Anniversary party which was a perfect opportunity to wear my new skirt. It took me two weeks to dig out my decade old shoes and two minutes to realize I'd forgotten how to walk in them. I moved on to the next subject. Lipstick. For the first time in all my life I was contemplating wearing lipstick. I realized that I've never worn lipstick before and I know little to nothing about how to go about picking out colors, types or brands. Looking at a cosmetic counter is daunting and I was afraid to come out looking like Tammy Faye Baker so I chose simple market research.

Realizing most of my friends were queer and devoid of such knowledge I didn't actually expect a response but my female family members answered me honestly with suggestions even though my email was tongue in cheek. My coworkers were feminine as well and were a good source of information. I learned how to apply lipstick, start in the middle, smear left, smear right, chop chop chop on a napkin though I do not know why. Something involving teeth and smearing. My family seemed to think I should start with light, neutral and earthy. Glossy was good but they get gummy then chop chop chop. My other friend told me something about fragrances to avoid, long lasting lipstick and implied there was a kissing technique I needed to know about. Another friend from North Carolina let me know a good woman never left the house without lipstick on, and offered to take me lipstick shopping. Then I heard of lip liner and color mixing. Color mixing? What the hell is that?!?! Are there rainbow swirls inside a tub? This whole thing got too complicated after I was told I had to monitor my lipstick and reapply from time to time. I wanted to concentrate on walking in my shoes and decided I wasn't ready for the world of lipstick. Cherry flavored Chap Stick was the winner.

During my discussions about lipstick I realized that I needed nylons. How do you pick out nylons? Multiple hilarious conversations about types, styles and brands were the topic of day at lunch time. Stockings, garter belts, control top, sandal toed, color options and something about eggs were enough to know I needed someone to go with me in picking them out. J.C. Penny had an adequate selection and with the help of my partner I departed shortly thereafter with two pairs of Hanes Plus Silk Reflections Silky Sheer Barely There Control Top Enhanced Toe Nylons. I still wasn't sure where the chicken came in to all of this but I was ready.

On the day of the party we got home with our new purchases, showered and got ready for the party. We destroyed the house like two girls getting ready for the prom. I retreated to the bedroom to wrestle with the nylons and failed at my first attempt to get them on. I was at least a foot shy of my intended target and my thighs were cut in half. It was unflattering so I tried again rolling them back and forth then up a few inches. One leg at a time. There, they're up! Then I noticed a roll appeared above my control tops but I wasn't sure that was supposed to happen. I pulled the nylons up close to my bra which looked better but when I sat, it rolled down into a tourniquet. I complained so my partner consoled me by showing me her roll which made me feel better. I suspected this happened to everyone bigger than a skeleton and contemplated how to hide it.

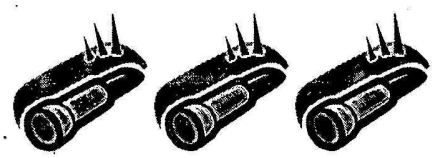
I tried on my skirt, blazer and shirt only to become indecisive. I tried on two more pairs of pants and went back to the original outfit only the skirt seemed too long so I hiked it up under my bra. Since my blazer was closed no one knew about the conspiracy underneath. It got me thinking of all these secret things that go on under girl clothing. Hide and tuck seemed to be the goal. Cure one problem, cause another. Eventually it all comes together and the least offensive thing that allows you to function wins.



My partner seemed to know all about this girl stuff. She owned makeup purchased this century and cleaned up

beautifully. I asked about mascara to see if it was special and if I could try some. Open mouth, paint some on, spread lashes with an eyelash brush then ask the girlfriend if I did it right. Score! I had makeup on.
We somehow managed to get out of the house only 40 minutes later than planned and arrived at my firms' party in style. My partner was gorgeous in her long blazer, curly hair and makeup. She even had lipstick on! She opened my doors, I learned to walk in my shoes from the car to the front door and we were stunning. I have been out at my firm for 15 years and introduced her as my partner. There was no reason to hide so we danced a slow dance together.

During this process I laughed pretty hard at the emails and conversations. Reprinted with permission is the best of the bunch.



*From: Gina*
*Sent: Friday, October 29, 2004 6:45 PM*
*To: Diana*
*Subject: Re: Educating Diana*

*I must say, your reports of the culture conflict and befuddlement between your trying-to-be-lipstick lesbian and your ill-fated, butch-laden past are positively Twain-esque. I imagine my diverting your attention to other matters in the early eighties may have had a hand in your current delirium, and, for this, I am repentant.*

*I am not merely feigning ignorance when I profess to have no knowledge of the kissing technique about which your friend is talking. My wife can well and truly kiss, but lipstick is not one of her daily applications, though she is otherwise appropriately festooned on a daily basis. In nearly ten years, she has worn it perhaps two dozen times in my presence.*

*Though my face is red with shame for it, I must say I do have information about the color mixing phenomenon. I believe some hearty feminine souls use a related but contrasting lip liner, much in the way we used to outline coloring book drawings before shading them in (think Crayola's Burnt Sienna and the box with the sharpener in it). To wit, the lipstick is the shade, the lip liner is – well, the liner. Blending with fingers or Q-tip-like devices is supposed to create a shaded effect. This is (thankfully) all I know.*

*In the matter of your other burning question: the nylons. They were the bane of my existence during my time in corporate hell, so I am a recovering wearer. In terms of picking them out, I may as well have hurled a dart into the display rack at Macy's and chosen that way. Whatever the method, for me they had all the comfort of the Judas Cradle at a medieval execution dock. I know I am in the minority here, but I own my biases - my wounds are still fresh.*
*Those free-thinking hosiers have concocted a method of sizing that relates to the measurement of nothing else in the known universe. Other clothing manufacturers must have patented the idea of numeric sizes, because this intrepid group chose letter sizes as their domain. And single letters were not enough. No, not for these pioneers. You must choose a letter range. A-B for the habitually anorexic. C-D for the "I'm-on Atkins" crowd, and E-F for most others.*

*Not to mount a soapbox here, but you'll notice there are no letters for larger-than-average hosiery. That's because this group of Neanderthals (men, no doubt) have decided to grace us with the epithet "Queen Size", which I could abide only if they would guarantee I would be treated like one upon wearing the garments.*

*Some tips for safe use: You cannot be too moist after a shower, because they will grind to a halt halfway up your legs, your knees will bind together, you may need to have the Jaws of Life applied in order to be extricated from them. If you have skin that is too rough, they will shred like Christmas tissue paper and run so badly that your legs will look striped. If you fail to pull them up far enough, the crotch will sag, you will experience fatal chafing, and your ankles will look like those of an African elephant roaming the savannah.*

*Control top hose are intended to conceal extra pounds by compression. Since it is physically impossible to cram ten pounds of sand into a five pound bag, the excess pounds merely struggle for freedom above the waistband and spend their time trying to roll the waistband toward the thighs, freeing the rest of their captive brethren. Hence, control top hose only succeed in controlling your inconvenient urge to take a full breath.*

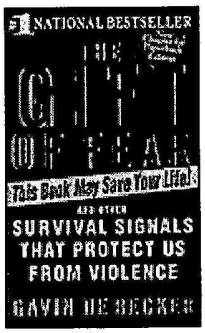
*Color should not be a problem in the least. As long as you can distinguish fluently between ecru, eggshell, taupe, off-white, beige, crème, fawn, mushroom, and light brown, it should be quite simple. Likewise black, night, midnight, ebony, ink, jet, onyx, raven, and sable.*

*The nude thing stumps me completely. I have never in my linguistic travels (and I am an English teacher) heard the misbegotten phrase "semi-nude" uttered anywhere else. Nude is a word that should join the ranks of words of the "you-are-or-you-aren't" distinction: i.e., dead, alive, pregnant.*

*And where nylons begat of eggs are concerned, you must rely on your highly-developed sense of reason. Ponder this conundrum: is a chicken stupid enough to wear nylons?*

*Best,*
*Gina*

## Book Reviews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AND OTHER
SURVIVAL SIGNALS THAT PROTECT US FROM VIOLENCE
GAVIN DE BECKER

**The Gift of Fear: Survival Signals that Protect Us from Violence**
**Gavin De Becker**
**Little, Brown**

**Reviewed by Lisa Hake**

I feel afraid every week, if not every day. I'm afraid of intruders—in the past year an intruder has broken into homes in my Greenlake neighborhood and attacked women sleeping in their beds. I'm afraid of clients who come to the mental health center where I work (most of whom are stable and law-abiding, but from time to time someone comes through our doors who is not). I'm afraid of dating—I know that most women are harmed by people they know, and although I take lots of precautions with new people, I have occasionally found myself surprised and disturbed by people I thought I knew well and have even slept with.

I have never thought of fear as a gift. I thought it was the cross women bore for being born in these times and living in a culture of violence and power and victimization. Fear was a price I paid for living my life as if I *wasn't* afraid—the price of living independently, of going out at night, of having a job that means something to me.

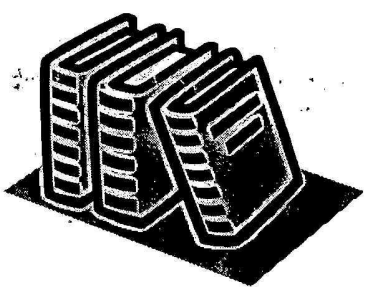
I have a bolt on my front door, a phone in my room, a cell phone in my car. I've taken numerous self-defense classes. I let my housemate know when to expect me home. I do what I can to keep fear at bay. But it hadn't occurred to me, until I read "The Gift of Fear," that fear itself may be my greatest ally.

Author Gavin De Becker is a psychologist who runs a consulting firm that assists politicians and movie stars in assessing their level of danger from other people. He also assists the less-famous in protecting themselves from the unstable employee they fired last week, the ex-boyfriend who makes threatening phone calls, and the weird neighbor who writes disturbing letters to a young girl. Through "The Gift of Fear" he is offering the benefit of his experience to a wider public.

But De Becker does not rely on any formula he has invented, or profiles of violent people that emerge from his work experience. Instead, the book is an elaborate permission slip—for women especially—*to trust your gut.* It is a detailed explanation as to why we should take our emotions seriously, regardless of what our minds tell us. De Becker provides one case study after another of people—often women—who were faced with violent people, and how they responded in ways that saved their lives by listening to their intuition. Often these people did things that didn't seem logical at the time—a naked woman slipping out of her apartment's front door as the man who just raped her looks through kitchen drawers for a knife just feet away from her; a man walking out of a convenience store because he was "uncomfortable"—just minutes before another man is shot in the same store by an armed robber. De Becker disassembles multiple stories like these, explaining how each person responded to cues they weren't even conscious of, responding to their intuition even though it might have seemed illogical, silly, or even more dangerous at the time.

He does elaborate on some red flags to watch out for in people who might have illicit intentions—excessive familiarity and charm, dismissing the word "no," even being helpful without being asked (which he calls "loan sharking"). He lists the "Messengers of Intuition"—i.e. nagging feelings, persistent thoughts, anxiety, doubt, etc—and how and why we should listen to each one of these. He not only gives permission to women to *not* be nice to people who get our guard up, but he explains why this is absolutely necessary for our survival

There are some situations where this book doesn't apply—situations that unfold so quickly that there simply isn't time to hear one's inner voice. But what De Becker communicates is that perhaps many of those situations could be avoided if we could hear ourselves earlier, or that even in the midst of a horrific event (such as a rape) we can find a way to escape and survive. After reading his book I realized I had more power than I gave myself credit for, even if a violent situation should occur, and felt less like a victim waiting for a psycho to come out of nowhere and destroy me. "The Gift of Fear" offers the idea that violence rarely "comes out of no where" but in fact can be detected and hopefully averted before it plays out—not by listening to Gavin De Becker's expertise but by listening to our own.



**Trio Sonata**
**By Juliet Sarkessian,**
**The Haworth Press, Inc.**

**Reviewed by C. Sykes**

Juliet Sarkessian's "Trio Sonata" is the story of one woman's relationship to a young gay couple, and how their involvement in her life reawakens erotic desires long repressed. "Trio Sonata" is enjoyable reading; however, this story might have been better as two novels—one focusing on Janna's sexual awakening, the other on the lives of the gay men—or a longer one exploring the characters more deeply and developing a more complex storyline. As it is, the novel abruptly skips from one storyline to the next, preventing the characters and storyline from being more fully developed.

The first half of the novel reads like a typical sexual awakening story. Nearing thirty, Janna is set to settle down with Winston, who provides security and comfort but for whom Janna feels little passion. When she meets Phillip and Alex, their youth and obvious sexual desire for each other remind her of what is missing in her own relationship. Predictably, she begins to question the life she has built and her relationship with her boyfriend. As the lives of these three become more closely intertwined, an erotic undercurrent emerges that ultimately changes things for all of them.

Midway through this story, the novel changes course. We're taken away from Janna's story, and into the stories of Alex and Philip respectively. I found their stories somewhat more engaging than Janna's, but they suffered from the lack of character and plot development that is ultimately what keeps this novel from being as engaging, interesting and thought provoking as it could have been. Without a deeper look into these characters' motivations and interrelationships, they remain superficial stereotypes: the repressed woman on the brink of self-discovery; the dull middle-aged fiancé; the handsome young gay man and his musically gifted but troubled lover.

As a queer-themed book, I found "Trio Sonata" to be fairly neutral. Although it chronicles queer relationships, it does not do so provocatively or powerfully. Janna's college days spent in the company of (stereotypically flamboyant or promiscuous) gay boys, and the early days of Alex and Phillip's relationship read as one might expect—the excitement of the gay scene compared to its het counterpart, the tragedy of AIDS, promiscuous sex. Again, the book skims the surface instead of exploring these potentially compelling characters and themes fully, allowing for an exploration of experience resonant enough to take this novel beyond its current limitations.

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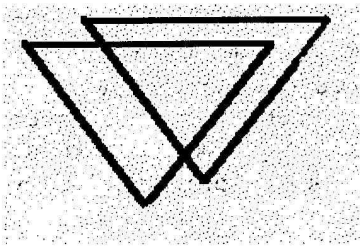
**Saucy Dish!**
**All things sensual and sexy!**

*No Saucy Dish this month! What's a girl to do? Grab a pen—or fire up your computer—and send your sex-related questions to Saucy for next quarter's column.*

This column offers sexuality education and insight into sex positive culture. Information contained within will be bold, opinioned and based on experience and research. Please ask questions about safer sex, our bodies, pleasure, relationships, sexual exploration, sex toys, sexy wear, flirting and more…

Send letters to SBWN Attn: Saucy Dish POB 30645, Greenwood Station, Seattle, WA 98113-0645 or email your questions to: saucydish@hotmail.com

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# Comments After Meetings

**16 January 2005 Casual Partnerships**

*"Fantastic meeting per usual Leilani! It was great to see 22 women at a meeting. It was very empowering to have so many people really willing to engage candidly and openly in this conversation."*

*"Great meeting. All the conversation really helped with my thinking. Thanks a bunch Leilani."*

*"Hooray. Fun. Not long enough. Can we do a sequel?"*

*"Next time we do this we need to reserve the downstairs room so we can spread out. It's fantastic to see so many women here and so many new faces."*

*"Great meeting. Great interaction with everybody but we needed the downstairs room."*

*"This topic couldn't be more timely for me. I appreciated hearing new information and new viewpoints as well as confirming my current contacts and viewpoints. Thank you!"*

*"I would love to be able to have these conversations in slightly smaller groups so that individuals could go into more depth about what they're thinking. But it's so cool and amazing to see so many women willing to talk about this openly, it's so reassuring. It's a political statement really. My sister just told me yesterday that she thinks my lifestyle is impossible, doesn't exist and no one would want it. And here I am surrounded by women I don't even know who obviously do think it's possible and are making it more so."*

*"Terrific workshop. I'd suggest that we limit check-in length when we have so much cool stuff to discuss and s many women."*


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1115 East Pike Street, Seattle, WA 98122 - 206.323.LGBT (5428)
info@SeattleLGBT.org - Open 7 days a week, Noon to 9 pm

# The "WuWu" Page

...for entertainment only...

## Horoscopes

### Aquarius Jan 20 to Feb 18

**Key word: Honesty** – Sometimes it is easier to go along with the illusion, which is created by an adoring crowd than to look into the mirror and be completely honest with ourselves. Your task this season is to get down to the business of understanding yourself by your own standard of values. It's not as scary as you might think.

- You seem to have turned your back on old ways of thinking lately. This new perspective will open the door for new contracts and possibilities. However, be aware that this new path will require you to spend more time on your own working out the details of your new endeavors.

### Pisces Feb 18 to Mar 20

**Key word: All that is** – Now you must sit back and take stock in your beliefs and your physical world. Soon you will have to hop back onto that treadmill and you want to have your sense of the universe and values in place when you do.

-It always seems like someone is trying to take something from you. If they want it so badly, let them take it. The space left behind will soon be filled with joy and bright beginnings. You will be encouraged by a new awareness of your own skills and options.

### Aries Mar 20 to April 20

**Key word: Joy** – Joy can be a fleeting thing for you Aries. You need to practice being aware of it when it finds you and holding onto it when you feel it is passing. You have more control over your own sense of joy than you know.

-It will be a rough season unless you are geared up to take things in stride. There appears to be a fleeting romance on the horizon. Chalk it up to pleasant distraction and ride with it. This is probably not the one for you simply because you two do not think the same.

### Taurus Apr 20 to May 21

**Key word: Understanding** –Definitely it is more your nature to plow through a difficulty than to try to understand it and untangle it from the inside. Trust that it will go easier right now, if you take a good look at the situations that confront you and try to work them out with patience. There will be plenty of help at your side.

- There has (or will soon be) relief from anxiety that you've been feeling lately. With this relief comes a sense that you are making no progress though. Don't dwell on the negatives. Because of work you have done in the past, the clouds will suddenly lift as if by magic, and so many of your plans will finally come together.

### Gemini May 21 to Jun 21

**Key word: Adventure**– Get out there! While everyone else is saving their pennies waiting for vacation in the summer, you find that you can do it on your own. Do it already! There's no telling what fun you'll have. Even a solo vacation will be filled with interesting and exciting fun, not to mention a few new friends along the way.

-At this time you have clarity and strength. Around the bend is an amazing opportunity. Trust that you know the way to make it pay off, because you do.

### Cancer Jun 21 to Jul 22

**Key word: Delight**- Not only are you delightful, but it is that you take such a positive interest in the people around you that makes you so special. Don't forget your manners this season. You may not be aware of the effects taking your light way will have on those around you.

-There seems to be a secret, which is being kept from you. Also you are sensing a bit more gossip going around your circle of acquaintances these days. Blow it all off because there is a great person who is watching your back and will see to it that things are set right on your behalf.

## *Leo Jul 22 to Aug 23*

**Key word: Gratitude** – I don't have to tell you that now is the time to be thankful for what you've got. It's true you can be very prideful at times, but you do know when to give credit where credit is due. Just a heads up: there will be a lot of giving out the credit over the next few months.

-You are finding less and less comfort in material gain, and you are re-thinking a close relationship. It is an individual choice, whether you stay with this relationship or not but just having taken the time to assess your feelings about the situation will leave you in a very positive position for new growth.

## *Virgo Aug 23 to Sept 23*

**Key word: Sisterhood/Brotherhood** – Your community needs you now. You have a caring way about you which is tempered with a pragmatic flavor. This is very important to those who are going to require your charity over the next few months.

-It would seem that you are sacrificing your own well-being for someone who needs your help right now. Don't forget to stay in good health and spirits and know that the work you do now for your loved one will enrich your family life for a long time to come.

## *Libra Sept 23 to Oct 23*

**Key word: Beauty** – You have always seen beauty in balance. Now you are challenged with the job of seeing beauty in that which is out of balance. Take the time to really experience the transitions that are about to flow through your life. You will learn that lack of balance can offer a new perspective and give you amazing insight.

-You have recently made a powerful decision worth celebration. And you will celebrate. You can expect your efforts to be matched by those close to you. Financial woes are abated by spring.

## *Scorpio Oct 23 to Nov 22*

**Key word: Courage- There are many chances on the horizon for you.** The only way to get through them is to buck up and do it. You'll be fine. Although change is not your favorite thing, you'll see that this time it is truly for the better.

- Oh Scorpio, this is a powerful and perhaps painful time for you. While it seems that the heartache is behind you, you still must deal with the business of cleaning up the mess. This may also include legal expenses. There is more to come out into the open, and this too may be very messy. Don't be caught off guard. Brace yourself and know that once it passes it is gone for good.

## *Sagittarius Nov 22 to Dec 21*

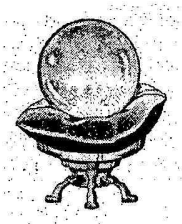
**Key word: Faith** – You may feel that there are light-years between yourself and those who you look to for love and comfort, but know that they are pulling for you and are feeling your love and thoughts.

- You've just regained your balance after an unpleasant episode. Although you feel you've lost some of your sense of magic and wonder on the world around you, be comforted in knowing that you do need the rest and you are in the very place where you need to be at this time.

## *Capricorn Dec 21-Jan 20*

**Key word: Freedom** – Seems like you are the only one who can take these winter months. It may seem that you are trapped by gloomy faces and attitudes. You find yourself bolstering the spirits of everyone around you. It's true they look to you for strength, but know that they will not fault you for doing your own thing if you chose. And spring is just around the corner, those gloomy faces will be smiling soon.

- You've been holding onto your assets and now you're guarding them fiercely despite criticism from opposing factions. Very soon, it will be revealed that you were wise in taking the action you have, and you will feel justified regardless of the opinion of your opposition.



## Questions for the Psychic

***Send your questions for our psychic to***
***cowbone@eathlink.com***

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# Calendar

Seattle Bisexual Women's Network offers support and discussion groups at the Seattle LGBT Community Center. For schedule updates and other events, please call our phone line at (206)517-7767, or visit our website:

http://www.geocities.com/sbwn/.

SBWN group meetings are typically held on the first and third Sunday of each month. When attending support group meetings, please refrain from wearing perfumes or other scented products for the comfort of all.

## Schedule of Meetings

**Sunday, February 20: Business meeting.** Contribute your ideas to keep SBWN moving forward!

**Sunday, March 6: Body Image.** Explore issues around body image in a safe, supportive environment.

**Sunday, March 20: Politics of Hair.** Long or short, what does it all mean?

**Sunday, April 3: Safer Sex.** Have fun learning about safer sex at this popular workshop!

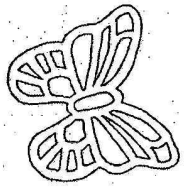
**Sunday, April 17: Getting Ready for Pride Potluck.** Help SBWN prepare for Pride.

**Sunday, May 1: Bi 101.** Discuss the basics of being bisexual.

**Sunday, May 15: Creating Bi-Friendly Families.**

**Sunday, June 5: Business Meeting/Potluck.**

**Sunday, June 19: Pride Prep Potluck.**



# Local Groups

**Seattle Bisexual Women's Network**
PO Box 30645, Seattle, WA 98113-0645.
http://www.geocities.com/sbwn/
E-mail: sbwn@hotmail.com

**Seattle LGBT Community Center**
The Center's mission is to create a meeting place for the LGBT community to grow together, increase public understanding, and celebrate our diversity.
1115 East Pike Street
(206) 323-LGBT (5428)
http://www.seattlelgbt.org

**Polyfidelity Discussion Group**
Support group and community for people in or interested in multipartner relationships. Discussions and literature on responsible non-monogamy, intimate networks, alternative relationships and community. Bi-monthly potluck discussions are held at 5:30 pm at the SPCC (Sex Positive Community Center, aka "The Wet Spot"). 1630 15th Ave W., Seattle, WA. (206) 728-4533.
http://www.scn.org/~spg/index.html

**BiNet Seattle**
BiNet Seattle is a bisexual non-profit, mixed gender, social and support organization created to foster a visible community for bisexual, bi-curious people, and their partners in the Puget Sound area. http://www.binetseattle.org

Fridays 7:30-9pm: Discussion / Support group meetings for bisexual and bi-curious men and women, their partners and other bi-friendly folk at the Seattle LGBT Community Center.

**Lesbian Resource Center**
A community–based organization committed to advancing the status of lesbians by combating oppression and promoting empowerment, visibility, and social change. (206) 322-3953.
http://www.lrc.net